



February 1, 2006

Re: Water use legislation, SB 850–852, 854, 857

To Michigan State Representatives:

The Adrian Dominican Sisters, a congregation of nearly 1000 vowed women religious based in Adrian, Michigan, are endorsers of the Great Lakes, Great Michigan Campaign. Water is the universal basis for all life. It is not just one commodity among many. Water is essential for the common good. Thus it is that we express support for amendments to SB 850, in order to strengthen Michigan's legislation to protect our natural water resources. Specifically we support improvements for water diversion protection; mandates for efficient use of water resources; and prevention of adverse impacts to our natural resources and wildlife habitat.

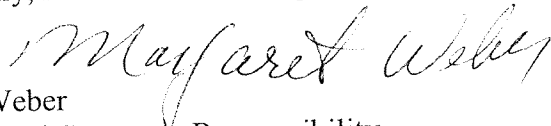
**Diversion Protection** - Currently, the only defense against a Great Lakes diversion is the Water Resources Development Act (or WRDA) – a federal law that gives the Governors of the Great Lakes states the authority to veto out-of-basin diversions. That authority has been challenged in a lawsuit filed in the State of Michigan by the Nestle Water Corporation. If the Nestle lawsuit is successful, Michigan will have no ability to prevent an out-of-basin diversion. We support first line of defense against diversions by requiring legislative approval for any project that seeks to sell water outside the Great lakes basin.

**Efficient use of water** – Using water efficiently can save a business money and reduces the risk of impacts on our natural resources. If we require the efficient use of water in Michigan, we can mandate a potential diverter of Great Lakes water to show they are also using water efficiently before attempting to divert Great Lakes water. We support adoption of the amendment that would require each water-using sector to develop generally accepted water management practices for their industry. Each user within that sector would then certify that they are following those practices when they register their use with the state.

**Resource protection** - The current definition of adverse resource impact focuses narrowly on the impact a water withdrawal would have on fish populations within lakes, rivers and streams. However, it does not address situations such as trees dying from lack of water, backyard ponds being dried up, or impairments on wildlife habitat. We support adoption of the amendment to

expand the definition of adverse resource impact to include damages to natural resources located on people's private property caused by a water withdrawal.

Protection of our most precious resource, water, is critically important to our health, well-being and economy, now and for future generations.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Margaret Weber".

Margaret Weber  
Coordinator of Corporate Responsibility  
Adrian Dominican Sisters  
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